

Green Lodging News

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Indoor Air Quality

What makes a lodging facility green?

The first things most people will think of are energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management. However, there is another section of the green lodging equation that is often overlooked...indoor air quality (IAQ).

There are several factors that interact to create an unhealthy indoor environment. The following is a list of the more common pollutants.

- Tobacco Smoke
- Biological Contaminants (mold, bacteria, viruses)
- Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)
- Gases (carbon monoxide, carbon monoxide, radon, etc)

The arguments for going smoke-free inside your facility are numerous and well documented. However, here's a quick refresher on why your facility

should consider going smoke-free.

- According to a report by the Surgeon General, exposure to smoke puts an estimated 126 million people in the U.S. at risk of heart disease, lung cancer, and death. It also increases the risk of sudden infant death syndrome, respiratory conditions, ear infections, and asthma. The report also states that there is no safe level of secondhand cigarette smoke.
- Smoking will also damages assets, increases housekeeping costs, increases risks of fire and could increase insurance rates.
- Also, eliminating smoking inside your facility could provide a marketing opportunity and create a competitive edge.

Biological contaminants such as molds and bacteria can become a problem when the indoor climate, especially relative humidity, is not properly controlled. It is important to

maintain humidity in the 40-50% range.

VOCs are another air quality concern. There are many sources of VOCs including paints, stains, varnishes, solvents, pesticides, adhesives, cleansers, and air fresheners. Most of these products have low VOC alternatives that should be considered.

All of the above pollutants are important and deserve attention. However, the biggest indoor air quality concern should likely be Carbon Monoxide (CO). CO is a deadly gas byproduct of incomplete combustion. It is an odorless/colorless gas which usually results from equipment failure, poor installation, and/or negligent maintenance.

It is vitally important that your facility be equipped with reliable CO alarms and that alarms are tested regularly. If necessary, hire a professional to assist with installations.



Green Lodging News is a publication targeted toward Michigan's hospitality facilities. It is a service of the Energy Office, Michigan Dept. of Labor and Economic Growth. If you are interested in subscribing to the bimonthly newsletter, please contact doherty1@michigan.gov.

Spotlight—Livonia Marriott

The Livonia Marriott has been certified as a Green Lodging Michigan Steward. The Livonia Marriott offers exceptional accessibility to downtown Detroit, Ann Arbor, Detroit Metro Airport, and the rest of Southeast Michigan. They offer a smoke free atmosphere with thoughtful amenities and well-appointed guest rooms.

The Livonia Marriott has implemented many unique environmental initiatives at their facility such as Energy Star lighting and equipment, using post consumer recycled paper products for offices and bathrooms, and specifying the use of low VOC products. The hotel also conserves water by using low flow faucets and fixtures and by offering a linen reuse program to guests.

You can learn more about the [Livonia Marriott](#) and the [Green Lodging Michigan](#) program by visiting their corresponding websites.

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